United Nations E/AC.51/2008/L.4/Add.5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
19 June 2008

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-eighth session
9 June-3 July 2008
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-eighth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Ms. Stefania **Rosini** (Italy)

Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

(Item 4 (a))

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2007/08

1. At its 5th meeting, on 11 June 2008, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2007/08 (E/2008/58).

2. The Director of the CEB secretariat introduced the report and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed their appreciation for the annual overview report of CEB for 2007/08 as well as for the role of CEB in enhancing coordination and effectiveness in the United Nations system. They welcomed the integration of the United Nations Development Group into the CEB framework as an important step in continuing efforts to strengthen the Board and the coordination of the United Nations system as a whole.

4. Delegations welcomed the Board's work on climate change, the global food crisis and the development of Africa, emphasizing that those were priority issues where CEB had an essential coordinating role to play. The view was expressed that

08-39120 (E) 230608

the global food crisis put at risk the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular in Africa. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the Board's coordination efforts with regard to the issues of peacebuilding, disaster risk reduction and people with disabilities.

5. Several delegations highlighted the Board's work in elaborating a plan of action for harmonizing business practices, in particular the human resources aspects of the plan. A number of delegations noted its enhanced role in that regard and expressed caution that that should not pre-empt Member States' consideration of business practices as part of ongoing discussions of system-wide coherence in the General Assembly.

6. Several delegations emphasized that the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly was considering the issue of sustainable procurement as part of its consideration of procurement reform and that CEB should await the outcome of those discussions before proceeding with its own initiatives in that regard.

7. A number of delegations highlighted the importance of the year-long United Nations system-wide human rights advocacy campaign to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and encouraged CEB members to participate in that project.

8. Several delegations sought clarification from the Director of the CEB secretariat on specific issues addressed in the report regarding CEB collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission; the effectiveness of the employment toolkit; the provision of support to the "delivering as one" pilot projects; the social, economic and cultural factors affecting the security and safety of United Nations staff as well as CEB coordination with the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises; the activities of the recently established legal network; the initiatives to improve cooperation with the Joint Inspection Unit; and the status of the independent evaluation of the eight "delivering as one" pilot projects that CEB had directed the United Nations Evaluation Group to conduct.

9. Some delegations highlighted the fact that the report had omitted the issue of gender mainstreaming, which had been covered in the two previous CEB annual overview reports. The view was also expressed that future annual overview reports should provide additional information on the impact and results of CEB decisions, as well as obstacles to coordination that had been encountered.

10. In response to the questions from delegations, the Director of the CEB secretariat pointed out that the format of the report prevented extensive consideration of many important issues. The absence of reflection on a particular subject did not mean that there had not been any activity on that issue. Active coordinated work was under way by organizations of the system with regard to gender. As to the peacebuilding agenda, he noted that work had been launched to determine how best the United Nations system could align itself behind the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission. He stressed that effective interaction between CEB and the Economic and Social Council was essential, and the collaborative effort on the employment toolkit was a good example in that regard. United Nations organizations were currently undertaking self-assessments with respect to the implementation of the toolkit. On the issue of security and safety, the United Nations was facing a changing environment, as shown by the tragic events in Algeria.

11. The Director of the CEB secretariat clarified that the work of the procurement network of the High-level Committee on Management remained exploratory and would not preclude any outcome of the Fifth Committee's considerations of sustainable procurement. The work of the legal network was, similarly, at an early stage and centred on the exchange of best practices. It was emphasized that efforts were being made to increase the transparency of the work of CEB and that plans were under way to develop a system to record financial flows and statistics, to monitor decisions and to make the website more user-friendly. On the issue of harmonization of business practices, the Director stated that such initiatives stemmed from General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The United Nations system remained committed to the 2010 target for the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, but the achievement of that goal was dependent on the progress towards harmonization of enterprise resource planning systems. CEB had further directed the United Nations Evaluation Group to conduct an independent evaluation of the eight "delivering as one" pilot projects, the first stage of which was expected to be completed shortly.

12. Delegations expressed satisfaction with the actions taken by CEB in response to the Committee's recommendation at its forty-seventh session for closer cooperation between the Board and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). In response, the Director of the CEB secretariat stressed the positive relationship established with the Joint Inspection Unit and highlighted the fact that relations with the Joint Inspection Unit were improving and that the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit would be invited to participate in the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. **The Committee took note of the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2007/08 (E/2008/58).**

14. **The Committee stressed that the Chief Executives Board had a mandate for coordination of the senior management of the United Nations system. In that regard, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of CEB, to ensure that when coordinating different issues, including management issues, relevant General Assembly resolutions be fully taken into account.**

15. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of CEB, to ensure that the annual overview report of CEB include information on measures taken by the Board to improve its transparency and accountability.**

16. **The Committee took note of the information provided about the reform of CEB, the plan of action for harmonization and reform of business practices, the security management system and the idea of a climate-neutral United Nations. In that context, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to provide detailed information on those issues during the main part of its sixty-third session.**

17. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of CEB, to provide in his future annual overview report specific information on the main difficulties encountered in the implementation of the coordination activities in different sectors as well as on the relevant solutions adopted and the impact of CEB activities on the United Nations system.

18. The Committee noted the endorsement by CEB of the recommendation for an evaluation of the eight pilot projects carried out at the country level under the One United Nations initiative. In that context, the Committee stressed the importance of an independent, objective and impartial evaluation process of One United Nations pilot projects. It pointed out that any criteria and methodology to assess the impact of the United Nations pilot projects should first be considered and approved by Member States.

19. The Committee, reiterating the conclusion contained in paragraph 114 of the report of its forty-seventh session (A/62/16), stressed that the provision of United Nations support to "delivering as one" pilot projects should not prejudice the outcome of the intergovernmental deliberations on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence by the General Assembly.

20. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request CEB to continue to monitor the effective collaboration of system-wide efforts against hunger and poverty.

21. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly welcome the progress achieved by CEB in coordinating activities in the United Nations system and request the Secretary-General to enhance coordinated efforts, in particular on emerging global food crises, especially in the light of the threat it was posing to advances made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.

22. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request CEB to present in its annual reports the progress being achieved regarding the main difficulties encountered by the organizations of the system in addressing the issue of malnutrition and hunger.

23. The Committee welcomed the high priority that CEB continued to attach to ensuring the effectiveness and coordination of the United Nations system support for Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and requested CEB to ensure that support for the New Partnership remained a priority for the United Nations system. It encouraged CEB member organizations to further align their priorities with those of NEPAD and to scale up their efforts to support it.

24. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly reaffirm its resolution 62/269 in which the Assembly recalled that it had not considered for approval the concept of environmentally friendly and sustainable procurement for the United Nations Secretariat, and requested the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the content of and criteria for such a concept, including detailed information on its possible impact on the diversification of the origin of vendors and on international competition,

including for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, for the consideration of the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

25. **The Committee welcomed the information provided on the cooperation between CEB, ICSC and the Joint Inspection Unit, and encouraged CEB to strengthen that cooperation through more frequent participation of the Joint Inspection Unit and ICSC in the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programme.**